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Joint Statement on the Re-inclusion of Athletes With Intellectual Disability in Future Paralympic Games

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Sports Federation for Persons with an Intellectual Disability (INAS-FID) are pleased to issue the following joint statement on their efforts to re-include athletes with an intellectual disability in future Paralympic Games and other IPC-sanctioned competitions.

- Mindful of the need to move forward as quickly as possible and to do so together, in 2007 a joint INAS-FID/IPC working group was established with the following terms of reference:
To appraise the present position, consider the options and make recommendations that, taken together, may ensure the re-inclusion of athletes with an intellectual disability in the London 2012 Paralympic Games and beyond. An effective sport input needs to be ensured throughout the process.
- This joint working group has already met on three occasions and both the IPC Governing Board and the INAS-FID Executive Committee are satisfied that significant progress is being made and that the re-inclusion of athletes with an intellectual disability in London 2012 and beyond remains a viable and reasonable objective.
- The activities of the joint working group are focused on the resolution of three key areas of concern: eligibility, sport specificity and on site protests and appeals. Significant progress is being made in all three areas and it is anticipated that systems, processes and procedures will be available for pilot testing during the early part of 2009. These systems are being developed using a scientific approach that is fully compliant with the new IPC Classification Code and engages actively with the relevant sports.
- To provide athletes with an intellectual disability with the competition experience necessary for them to prepare for London 2012 and to provide the joint working group with the evidence base necessary to test and refine the systems that will be required for successful re-inclusion, opportunities will be created from as early as possible in 2009 for athletes with an intellectual disability to be given access to both regional and world-level competitions in a variety of sports.
- It is envisaged that the inclusion of athletes with an intellectual disability in future Paralympic Games, beginning with London 2012, will be formally ratified by the IPC General Assembly in November 2009.

The IPC and INAS-FID recognize that this is an ongoing process, requiring constant refinement and continuous improvement. However, they are pleased with progress to date and they remain confident that the continued efforts of the joint working group and those associated with it will enable athletes with an intellectual disability to be re-introduced to Paralympic competition in time for London 2012.